Amiga Random-Monthly gaming magazine!
Issue 4 - Aug 2014 - A Comiga Publication

880 Gamer

BALLS! BALLS! BALLS!

It's a Ball-arama special!

BALL-TASTIC-DISK!

Come play with our big shiny balls!



You will find inside....

Marbles!

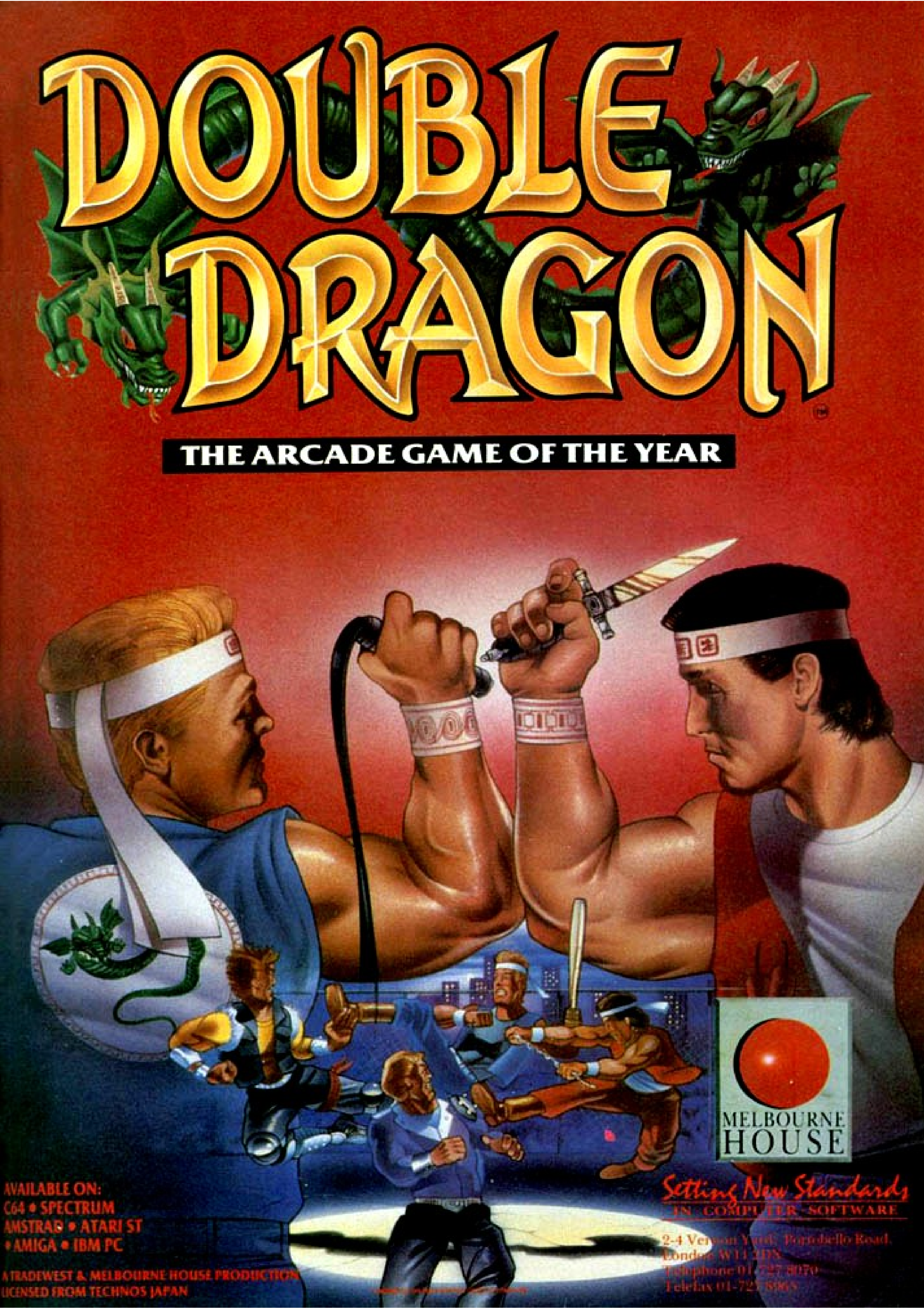
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Pinballs!

Ball Cheats!

Jesus on drugs!

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THE NIGHTMARE IS ABOUT TO BEGIN

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>>start 880

Welcome to issue four of 880 Gamer, something I am extremely proud of. When I set out to create this little magazine I set myself the challenge of at least equalling the same number of issues as the fantastic APOV Amiga magazine, and with issue five already in the works (well... I am playing some games) I look set to surpass them in number of issues. Now I am not bragging I am better, far from it as I could never dream of equalling the sheer quality set by that magazine, but for me it is a monumental achievement and what better way to celebrate than devoting this issue entirely to balls!

The idea actually came up in the last issue. Those playing at home may have picked up I am from Adelaide in South Australia after referencing 'the malls balls'. For those to lazy to Google, I present our big shiny balls below to gaze at in wonder. To be honest they don't do a lot except sit there, but visitors would be forgiven for thinking this city has an obsession with pinball machines. Alas sadly this is not the case, pinball machines are becoming a rarity around here.

But we wont let that stop us from having a good bash at a pinball game! Inside this issue you will find the amazing Pinball Dreams, one of the first pinball games to show the world how great pinball can be on your TV. Keeping with the steel ball theme we also have the ultra violent future sport Speedball plus other games that all revolve around some sort of ball.

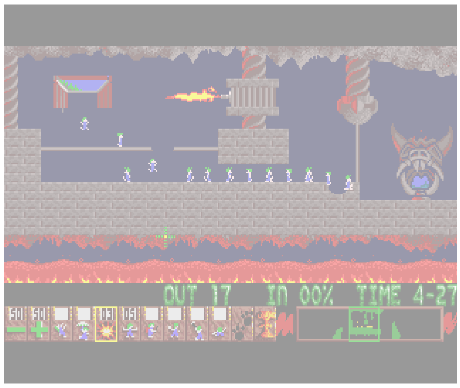
As usual we have a handful of demo scene disks to rave the night away to with a special treat if you have a soft spot of early 90's techno in the way of Jesus on E's. And if you have a real Amiga or love to crank up the emulator, this weeks cover disk contains the Nightmare table from Pinball Dreams so again you can read the review and then play the game to judge for yourself.... then write to me and point out all the errors in my review and promptly abuse me. It should all be a lot of fun.

So I leave you now to gaze at my big round balls. Enjoy playing with them until the next issue!

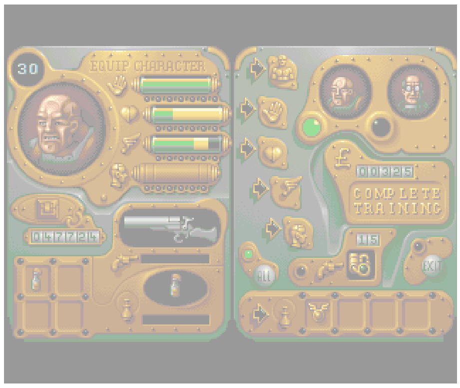
Mark.Stanner.
Lord of the balls and editor of 880 Gamer



880 contents









880 News >>

All the news you probably don't need to know...

In breaking news from months ago (Such is the blistering speed of the 880 news team!), 880 Gamer has been granted the honour reserved normally for such nobility like Amiga Power, CU Amiga and Amiga Format. I speak of course about 880 Gamer getting added to the wonderful *Amiga Magazine Rack* web site which as you are probably aware contains scans of all of the greatest Amiga Magazines ever to grace the Earth.

Don't think though for a moment all this newly found fame is going to my head, I am still the same old humble editor I was all those issues ago (all three of them...) with the exception of I now only drink water that is exactly 8.5C', now charge a very reasonable $50 per signature or $80 for a tube of bodily fluid of your choice, and now officially go by the name of "the artist formally known as 720"... my goodness that last one was a bad geek joke.

Jokes aside though, I am truly honoured to be added to this site. I was an avid reader of CU Amiga magazines back in the day, who I believe had a good balance between fun and games, along with the serious techie stuff and tutorials. The anticipation of scanning the news agents shelves for the latest issue with a successful purchase was always a great feeling, and settling down with a bag of chips in a quite room with my favourite mag was always a highlight of the month (and one of the few times I would not actually be messing around on my Amiga).

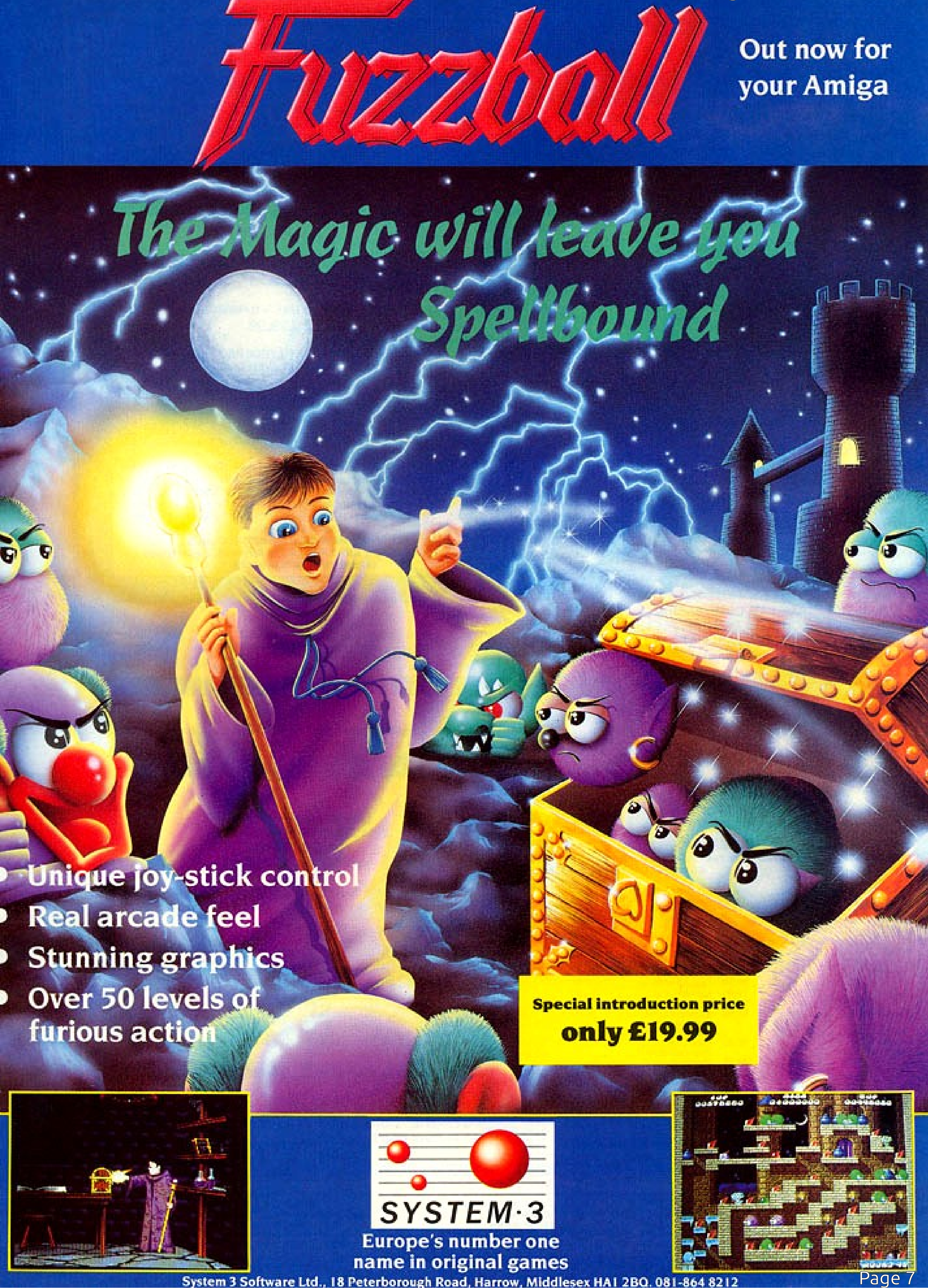
Those magazines never followed me to my new house though, and with a clean out of the family shed one day they all made their way finally to the recycle bin. Only one and a bit issues remain. The first is only the front cover of the very first copy of CU Amiga I ever owned. It was actually a Christmas present from my friend who had known my parents would buy an Amiga for me that Christmas. That front cover was stuck on the wall in the family home in the study where it still remains today (I even remember all the contents of the cover disc!).

The second was by pure chance. I will admit I dropped out of buying CU Amiga towards the end as while I enjoyed the technical side, games were what I really loved but with those becoming few and far between I ended up loosing some interest (sorry Tony). As luck would have it one day when I was in a news agent I spotted CU Amiga with a rather unusual Monty Python style cover. It did not take long to realise this was the last ever issue of CU to come out and without hesitation I purchased it not even caring what was in it. I still have that copy and no one is going to recycle that!

So what's this all this reminiscing got to do with The Amiga Magazine Rack? Well, like me a lot of you probably had a favourite magazine, and like me a lot of you have probably lost your prized collections over the years (partners are notorious for throwing out), but with the fantastic hard work put in by all of those involved with this site, you are able to read those magazines all over again with full page scans of full issues. Better yet all of the pages are catalogued for reviews, scores and so on so you can quickly and easy search any magazine for any review along with links to Hall of light data base. An amazing level of work is contributed by all involved and is rather special to think 880 is right up there with them all. No... seriously, because its sorted alpha-numerically 880 Gamer is literally up there on top of all the other magazines!



So if you have never visited the site, its well worth checking out, or perhaps you are already here reading 880 Gamer right from The Amiga Magazine Rack. Either way, check it out, it is an amazing point of reference for Amiga reviews and information, and if you have any of the missing issues and a scanner handy perhaps you can help out with the ever increasing wealth of knowledge and preservation for future generations.


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880 cover disc

Its a nightmare of a demo this issue, just look at it!

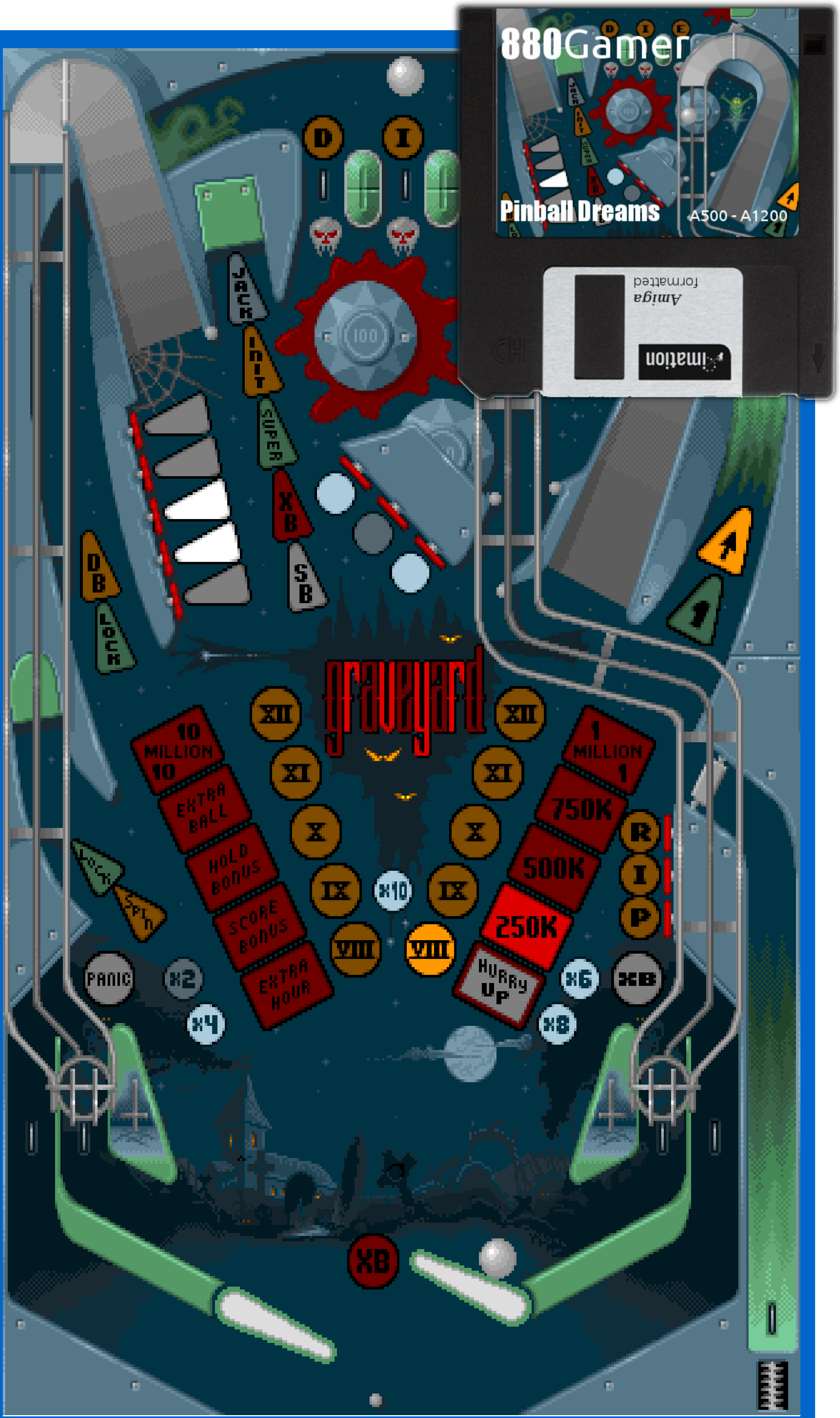
PINBALL DREAMS

Nightmare demo

You will need some pretty big balls to play this issues demo. Even better big solid steel polished balls! Yep, its the spooky Nightmare level from Pinball Dreams to haunt your dreams and make you scream in agony as you loose another ball down the middle.

Use either the Amiga's shift keys to control the flippers... the left shift controls the left flipper, the right shift controls... I am sure you can work it out. Smash the space bar to give the table a good bump if the ball is threatening to throw itself down the middle, and to launch your ball either the back arrow or pall back on your mouse for a more precise launch. Pressing F1 will start the game. It's that simple!

Rack up points by hitting bumpers and switches, or launching at ramps... its pinball, I am sure you get the idea. Good luck, and remember to bring a clean change of underwear!





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Game On!

Your one stop shop for game reviews

Its game review time, so lets get gaming! But first, a few house rules on how we review games here at 880:

- Games are played in emulation and not on real Amiga's. This is to judge a game on its own merits and not the limitations of long load times, never ending disk swaps (I'm looking at you fighting games!) and for all those whiz bang 3D games that were just never going to run even on the most powerful machines (COUGH!... Alien Breed 3D 2 COUGH!)
- The release date will be taken into consideration when reviewing since games advanced in leaps and bounds both graphically and sonically year on year, but if we think it looks crap we are still going to say it!
- If there are multiple versions available (eg. A500 / A1200) then each will be compared based on the single review and differences in scores awarded based on each version.
- All games are played on an evil kitten fuelled PC responsible for the death of the Amiga, although we lessen the evil by using penguin friendly Ubuntu with FS-UAE.
- And what about fabulous prizes I hear you ask? How about...



If it's brilliant and scores 90% or higher, then we break out the big gold bars! Feel free to melt them down into giant gold balls for this issue to stare at and polish all day long!



If its still a decent play with a score of 80% or higher then it is still worthy of some sterling silver. Again we recommend this issue to melt these bad boys down into big silver shiny balls!

Game On!

Your one stop shop for game reviews









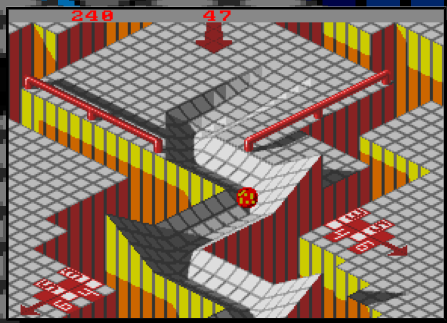




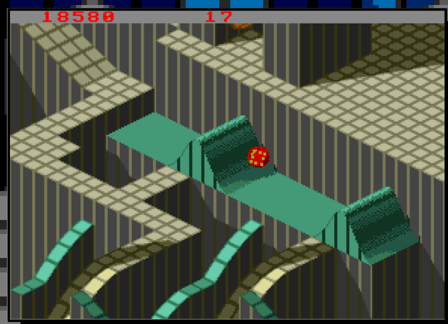
Marble Madness

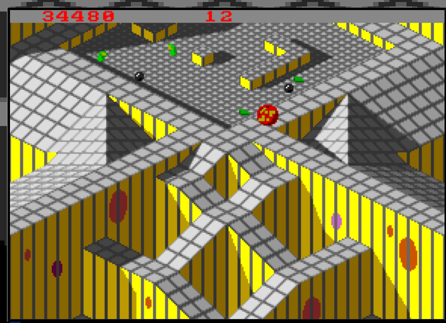
Electronic Arts - 1986 - A500

Back in primary school we went through a marble craze, and even though I was not the best player out there I had a trick that resulted in getting some pretty sweet marbles. You see everyone would loose them down this deep drain, and sometimes I would purposely lure people towards it with my marble often resulting in their pride and joy falling to its doom. Then on the weekends I had a handy little contraption I made which could lower down through the grate and with some careful steady hands scoop them up for a belated victory. Easy win! Marble madness on the other hand is not such an easy win and sometimes you will be aiming for that drain pipe to get to the end of the level!



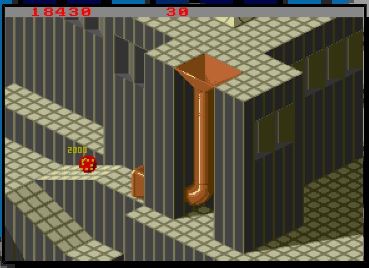
The aim of the game is simple. Get your marble from the top of the level to the bottom goal while trying to not fall off the edges into the empty void and also racing against the clock. You do not have any lives and you can die as many times as you like, but all that death is slowing you down wasting precious seconds. As soon as the time runs out, its game over. When you start each level you begin with however many seconds were remaining when you finished the last level with the addition of some extra time, so you soon learn that completing each level is not only enough, but completing each as fast as possible is essential as you will find yourself soon running out of time if you have taken a lazy roll through the previous levels. There are some bonus pads to try and hit or killing off enemies that result in precious bonus seconds, but some times the time taken to achieve these is more than the reward and is not always worth the temptation.

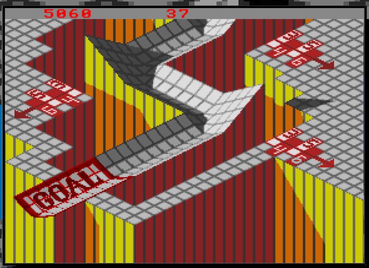


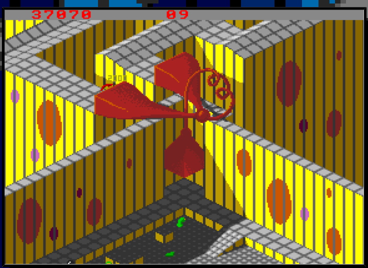


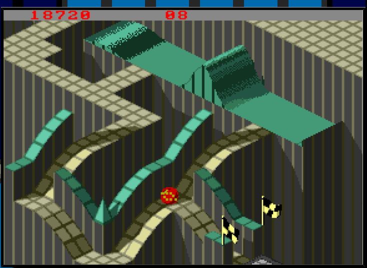
Controlling you little glass ball can be somewhat tricky at times. The game is played in an isometric view which means your controller directions don't really match as everything is moved 45 degrees. Its almost easier to turn your control 45 degrees to prevent confusion with which way to push! Even after some solid amount of play there will still be moments where your brain gets confused and you find yourself pushing in the wrong direction sending you marble flying into the depths of hell. Your marble also apparently has the mass of a small moon, meaning changing direction and steering is very slow at best. It takes some time to get used to. On your way through the labyrinths like those from that movie... Labyrinth... you encounter nasties that want to knock you around, gobble you up or even dissolve you, although David Bowie fails to make an appearance with his most awesome of awesome 80's hair! Even when there are no nasties around the levels themselves are extremely tricky with narrow ledges to balance on, waves to surf, giant vacuum cleaner nozzles.. having your balls sucked into a vacuum cleaner nozzle will never end well! Its all tricky and imaginative fun, and just when you start to work it all out one level flips everything around and back to front where the laws of physics take a holiday.



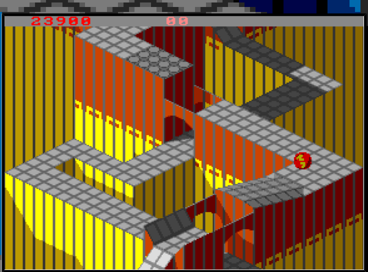






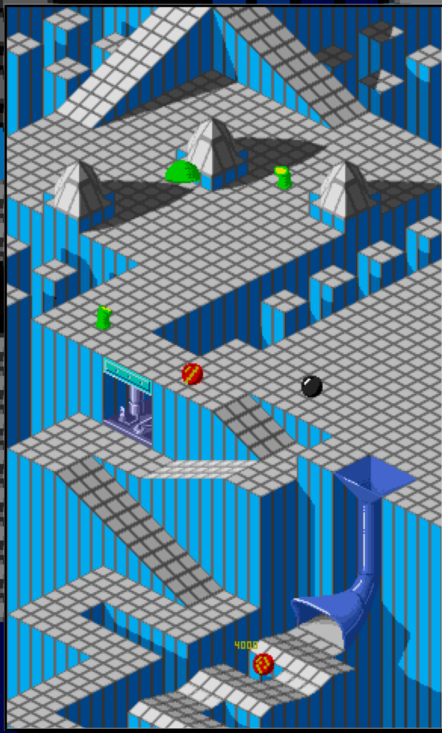


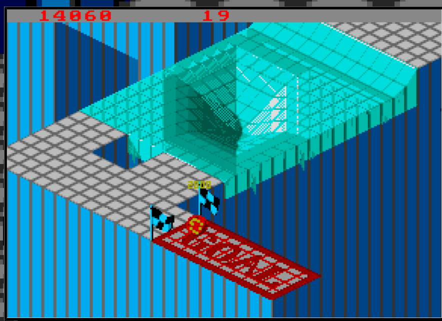




If you are looking for a visual feast with amazing effects that push your Amiga to breaking point, you might as well look away now. Graphically it looks nice and not far off the isometric view drawings I used to doodle in design class. Colours are bright and simple with some neat animations, but overall the bulk of each level is quite plain and empty. Each level has a uniqueness though and some wonderful little ideas keeping each one fresh and never repetitive. Unfortunately despite its simple looks it can be somewhat choppy which makes the game feel a little rough and sluggish. With each level is a unique tune which while not brilliant in quality, are fun and give each level a unique feeling matching some of the on screen action and atmosphere. Some sound effects accompany the background tunes filling it out more, but on the whole nothing spectacular. And what about a fantastic title screen and music I hear you ask? A plain grey silent screen with balls bouncing around is all you get I am afraid.

So what have we learnt here? Playing with my balls is slow, looks somewhat plain and they make a relatively unexciting dull thud noise when I smack them against a wall. It does not sound like the recipe for a good time, but oddly it just seems to all work and Marble Madness is surprisingly a lot of fun. There is not a lot of levels so you will master this game pretty quick, but saving the best for last you can play simultaneous two player where you race against each other on the same screen. Lagging behind your opponent will see you disappear of the screen and penalised. With multiple routes its interesting to see which is faster when racing. What makes marble madness special is there was nothing really like it before, and sadly nothing really like it since so it stands alone largely unchallenged.





Marble Madness

A500 - 1986

GRAPHICS	65%
SOUND	58%
GAMEPLAY	82%

A surprisingly good game when considering its age. Tricky controls and choppy frame rate hold this game back slightly, but there is still a lot of fun to be had here!

SCORE 75%

PINBALL DREAMS

21st Century Entertainment - 1992 - A500

IGNITION

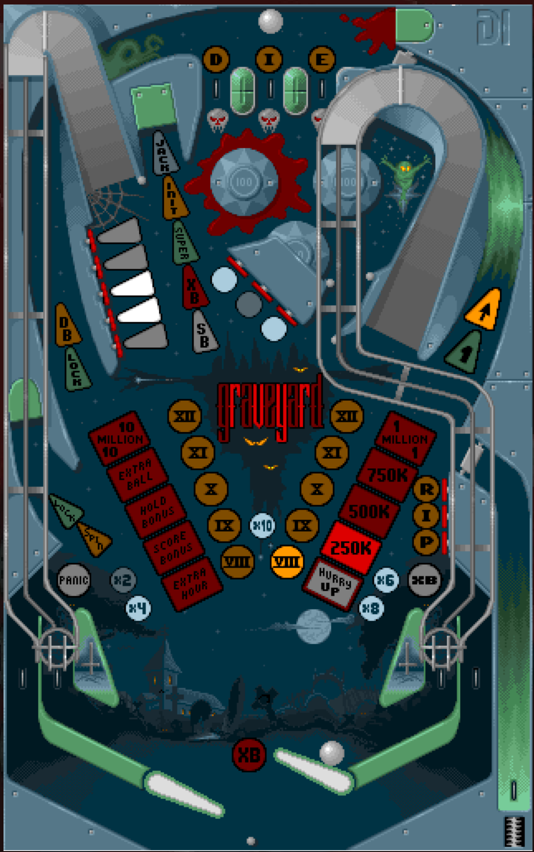


Simplest of all tables and yet the hardest to score big on, try to fuel up your rocket in preparation for blast off! Surprisingly this table doe not feature any ramps and only two bumpers, although this is a refreshing table to play with a simple straight forward layout without trying to overcrowd things with millions of features.

There is an odd feeling when you play Pinball Dreams because its a retro game, based on pinball machines which are now considered retro and all running on a computer also considered retro. I think that feeling is one of being old! ***Sigh***... but that's not necessary a bad thing because even after all these years this is still an amazingly fun game to play and a great way to pass time with friends or trying to beat your all time record!

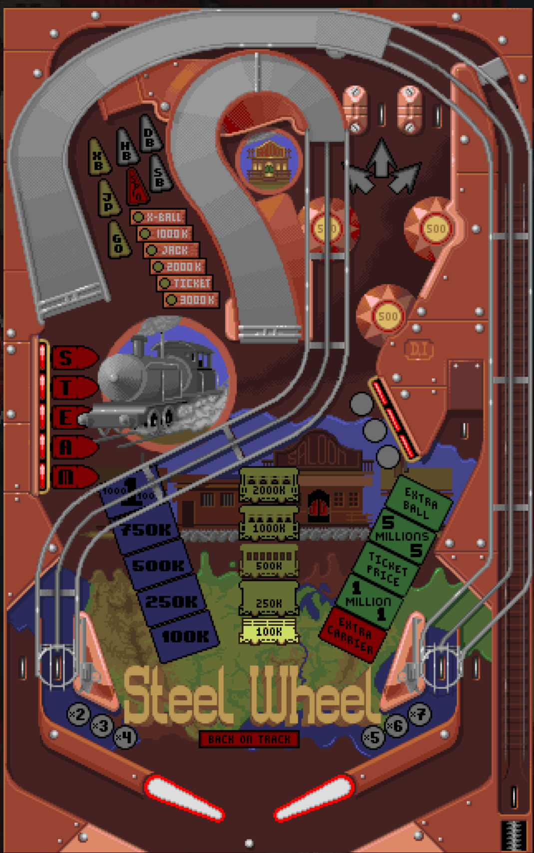
If you don't know what a pinball machine is, stop reading now and go back to listening to One Direction. For those that do, there are few games that can match Pinball Dreams for outstanding playability and overall shine and polish! Opening with slick music and presentation timed to perfection you have the feeling of booting up an 'A' grade demo scene disk, complete with scroll text at the base of the menu. Four tables are on offer each with its own style and theme from space rockets to spook fest graveyards, and each table presenting unique scoring features and style of play. This is important as it keeps each table fresh and not repetitive requiring a different approach to maximise your all important score.

Normally I would talk about game-play or visuals first, but I am diving straight into the sound and music which is nothing short of amazing in this game. From the title music to each tables individual tunes matched perfectly to the tables theme, the music is crisp, clear and a joy to listen to. The music changes all the time as well from waiting to add players, mood building music or sounds waiting to launch you ball, to the in game music and tunes that accompany each event you trigger. Even when you finish a game or return to the main menu, you will find more wonderful and different music scores await you. I have never known a game to contain so much fantastic music, and every piece suits the game perfectly.



NIGHTMARE

Complete with creaking doors and other things that go bump in the night, this table is so spooky if you look at the above screen grab there are two balls... Spooky!



Steel Wheel

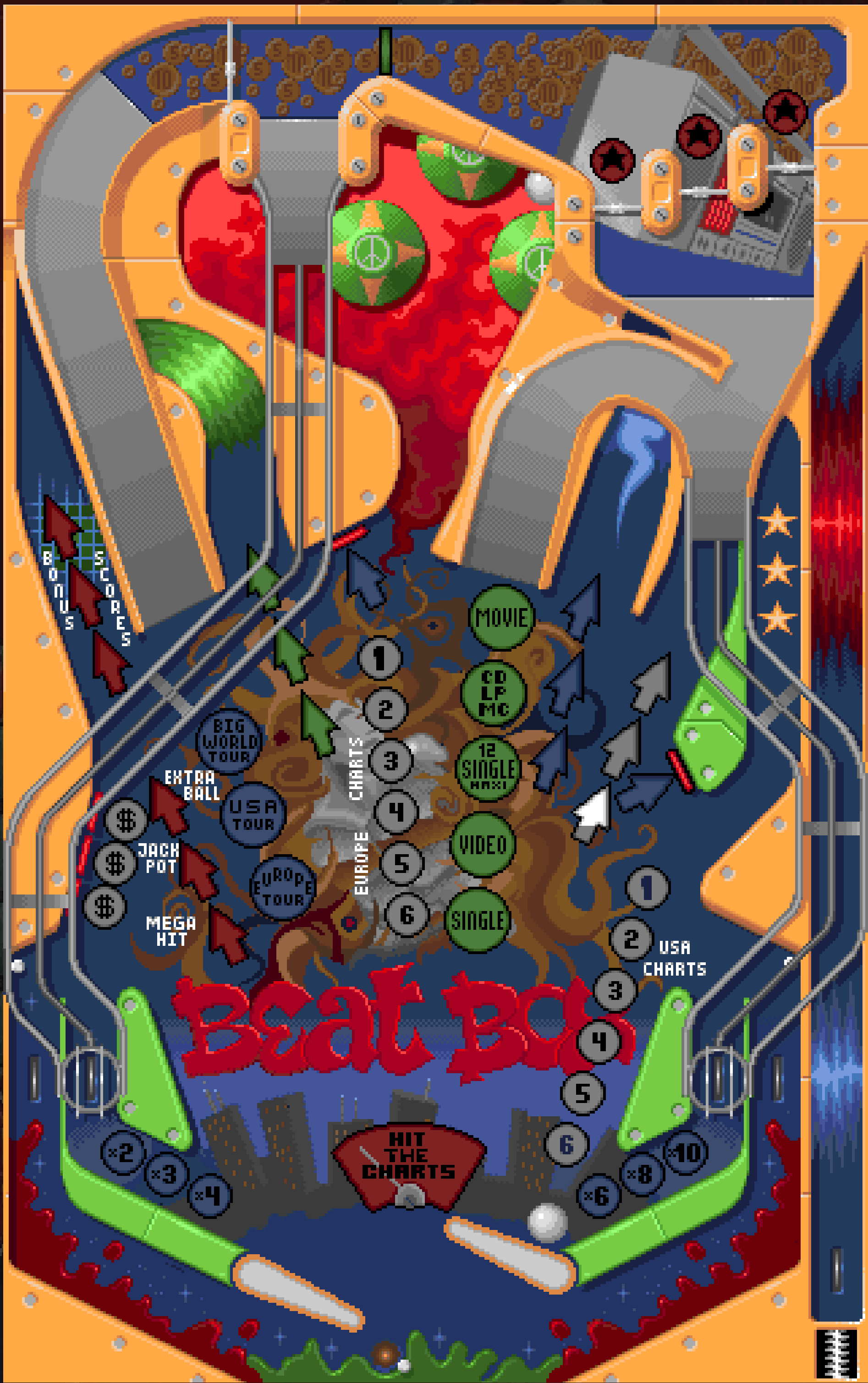
Set in the old days of the wild west, aim to increase your ticket prices and additional carriages. Comes authentic bullet sounds and steam whistles and train sounds.

Then there are the sounds which again are all unique and individual to each table, from 90's dance era shout out voices in beat box to the hiss and whistles of steam trains in Steel Wheel. There is an amazing level of speech and sound effects that just never seem to stop as your ball flies around the table with every bumper, ramp and switch triggering its own sounds. They are all wonderfully clear blaring at you while the music plays away in the back ground in time to the action on screen never leaving a single second of silence. In fact the only time things will be silent is the short loading time between the main menu and the tables.

Playing Pinball Dreams is a joy as well with extremely fluid and fast game-play that is challenging while not been frustrating. With the game running as smooth as Valvoline it comes down more to your reflexes and timing never giving you the chance to blame poor frame rate or programming faults. And just like a real pinball machine each table is loaded with challenges and jackpots galore which all match each tables theme. The table designs are fantastic as well and you get a real feeling that the team spent an obsessive amount of time fine tuning all of the ramps and angles to ensure you never become frustrated with a poorly angled ramp that always throws the ball down the centre. Beat Box is the only table that suffers a little from this ever so slightly with its large array of ramps and tunnels, and with this slightly cluttered table can result in some unlucky high speed richshae's that dive straight between your flippers, but again this comes down to learning each of the tables and how to play them with all important nudges to get yourself out of trouble. Just like in real life though don't bump the table around to much or you will get the tilt warning cutting all power and loosing your ball.

So Pinball Dreams sounds brilliant, plays great, so how does it look? In a word fabulous! Each table has unique theme and style with beautifully drawn tables and details. If I was to pick a favourite it would be Ignition. While not the most feature rich or high scoring table, its striking gloss red finish and simple layout really look the part. Beat box looks appropriately 90's cheesy with its bright colour scheme, while nightmare is perfectly dark blue and moody. There is nice gradients used on ramps and other parts which prevent the table from feeling flat, while the screen seems to literally feel like its full of hundreds of blinking lights and arrows lighting up the table. Even before starting a game you are presented with the table with everything flashing and lighting up which looks fantastic. The few title screens and menus also look the part keeping the same level of polish throughout the game.

BEAT BOX



Playing this table gives you the urge to put on some hyper colour clothing and start watching the Fresh Prince of Bel air! Every bumper seems to shout out in some cheesy 90's techno way... its truly amazing how fast the 90's became dated, and that's why I love this table so much! Mr Smith approves! >>



Everything is sounding fantastic, so are there any faults? Well there are a few although don't think for a moment this detracts from the enjoyment of the game. Firstly above each table is your score and text which is done in the old VFD calculator style display which really looks the part, but can be somewhat hard to read as text scrolls. Then there is the physics of the ball which feel a little floaty. I think this is more down to the tables been slightly shorter than a real pinball table and so the vertical movement is slightly restricted to keep the flow of the game, and the ball itself whilst meant to be made of solid polished steel looks extremely dull and grey. Multi balls are missing along with the 'shoot again' second chance when you are dealt a raw deal early in a game.

Don't for a moment let those last points put you off playing this game though. Even with the latest gaming wonders having some very pretty pinball games in mind blowing 3D, Pinball Dreams still remains one of the most impressive pinball games I have ever played on any machine. If you like Pinball machines, you will love Pinball Dreams.

GOLD!

Pinball Dreams

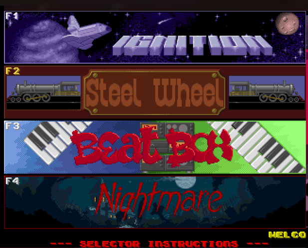
A500 - 1992

GRAPHICS	89%
SOUND	97%
GAMEPLAY	92%

If you are a fan of Pinball Machines or games, this is a must have for any collection. One of the best Pinball games for any platform

SCORE 90%

21ST CENTURY ENTERTAINMENT





PINBALL DREAMS









At last – A true multi-table Pinball simulator

32 colour graphics
Smooth 50 frames/second scrolling
Four varied tables

- Ignition
- Beat-Box
- Steel Wheel
- Nightmare

One to eight player game
Fun, fast and furious – just like the real thing!



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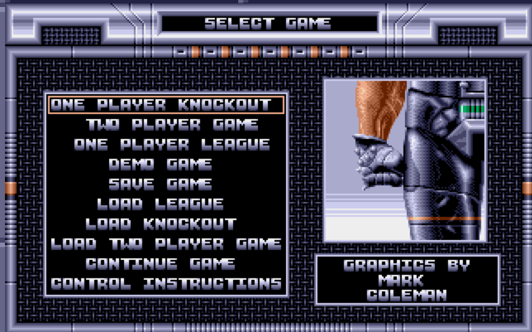
Speedball

Image Works - 1988 - A500

From the opening title screen where a steel glove with steel spikes punches through a solid steel wall, you get the impression that this sports game is not going to have to many rules with a good dose of violence. Surprisingly however there are officials and referees in this game, its just they do not actually enforce any rules and are solely there for you to bribe on the way to the top. I am struggling to think of any other sports game that allows you to bribe so many different people, its truly awesome!

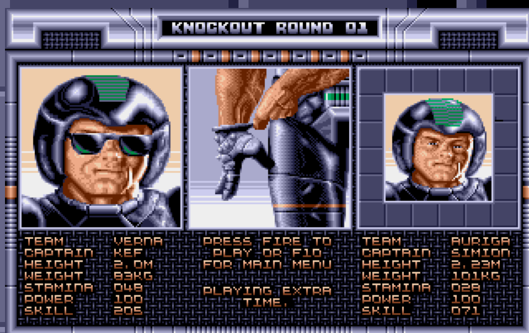
That whole opening screen of steel, steel and more steel follows you through the game with seemingly everything made of steel from the menus to the arena you play in, with the only exception being the soft human bodies of the players, although they to are encased in solid steel with only their faces showing. The menus and other screens look fantastic, and the players and other highlights on the pitch look great as well but unfortunately the arena itself looks very devoid of any detail resulting in a mostly flat grey look. This is probably the one area I feel that lets down the whole look of the game, which is a shame as its the area you will spend the majority of your time looking at. Bonus pick ups and coins to collect are neatly animated to look like they appear through the steel floor tiles or are in fact the tile spinning. Overall while the play area is somewhat dull, but there are lots of little neat touches that help detract from this and to be completely honest the action is so thick and fast you don't have much time to stand around complaining about the interior decorator.

This speed and action is the big selling point for Speedball. Menu's are simple and to the point, and you can get straight into a game extremely fast. Its a little like a game of in-door soccer, iced hockey and the tag game I would play in school all mixed together. Two goals each end of the play area rapped in high steel walls with a team of five a side including a team goalie. Play starts when everyone is in position with a neat ball launcher which spins and randomly shoots the solid steel ball in any direction at varying speeds. It is then a mad dash by everyone to get the ball and if your opponent gets to it before you, simply start throwing punches until he falls to the ground dropping the ball.... thirty seconds later you find yourself face down on the steel floor after a massive sliding tackle from his team mate. From there it becomes a non stop rumble and action as each team tries to score a goal. The gaol itself is not to wide and hight restricted, so you have to throw the ball waist high with a quick tap because if you hold the button you will throw a higher longer ball that will crash into the wall above the goal and simply bounce back. After a while you will learn team work and passing is essential, and the two methods of throwing the ball work very well.

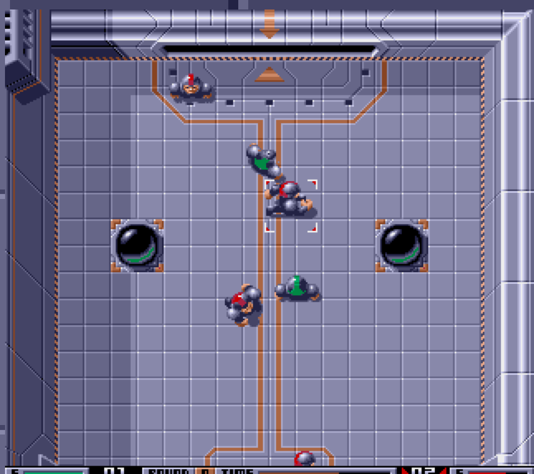


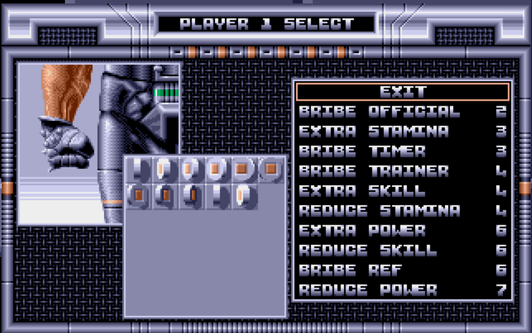
There is nothing here that looks comfortable!


The spinning ball launching thingy of DOOOOM!



Looking pretty smug with those kick ass bitmap shades.


Must.. score... goal.....aghhhhhh!



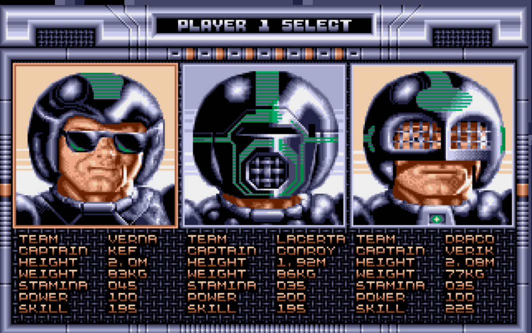
Who should we bribe today?



Lets just all stand around and wait for the ball...



Do I even rank on this list?



Very fashionable in the future, I can't wait!

Unlike indoor soccer though the play area has a few more features with a hole in the wall either side half way down which is handy to throw the ball through to the other side where your team mate is waiting. There are also pinball table style round bumpers which bounce the ball off at different angles depending on how they are hit. To spice things up these change locations as you progress through the game, with some in the middle blocking clear straight goal shots, while others at the side of the goal which can make for some great goal moments when you rebound off the bumper into the goal (extremely satisfying). The only thing that feels a little restrictive is the play area is only as wide as your screen, with vertical movement only. This however does keep the action more concentrated and you can easily see where all your team mates are.

As soon as that steel hand blasts out of your screen in the title you are assaulted with a very electronic industrial feeling tune that is quite brutal and fast which suits the game perfectly. This tune however plays all of the time including in the background when playing, although the volume is dipped to give a more underlying tune. With the pace of the music and pace of the game this works very well adding to the brutal atmosphere. Sound effects however are a little lacking, with some odd and unintentional bleeps and noises, and even the occasional goal where the crowd which would normally cheer, seems to be momentarily played on ultra fast replacing the crowd of people with a crowd of chipmunks. There are plenty of punching noises and some nice solid steel ball on steel wall sounds, but overall its not the games strongest point. Even the end of game siren is actually just a car horn which feels very out of place in a big steel arena.

Speedball at its time of release was great, and it is still a fun and challenging game to play. Its hard to find another game that will match it for fast brutal in your face action. It covers off all the sports game requirements with knock-out games, leagues and two player action which is a lot of fun, but the in game presentation is missing some polish and falters a little with some sounds. It was fun in 2095, but 2100 is where the action is at and that is for another review another day.



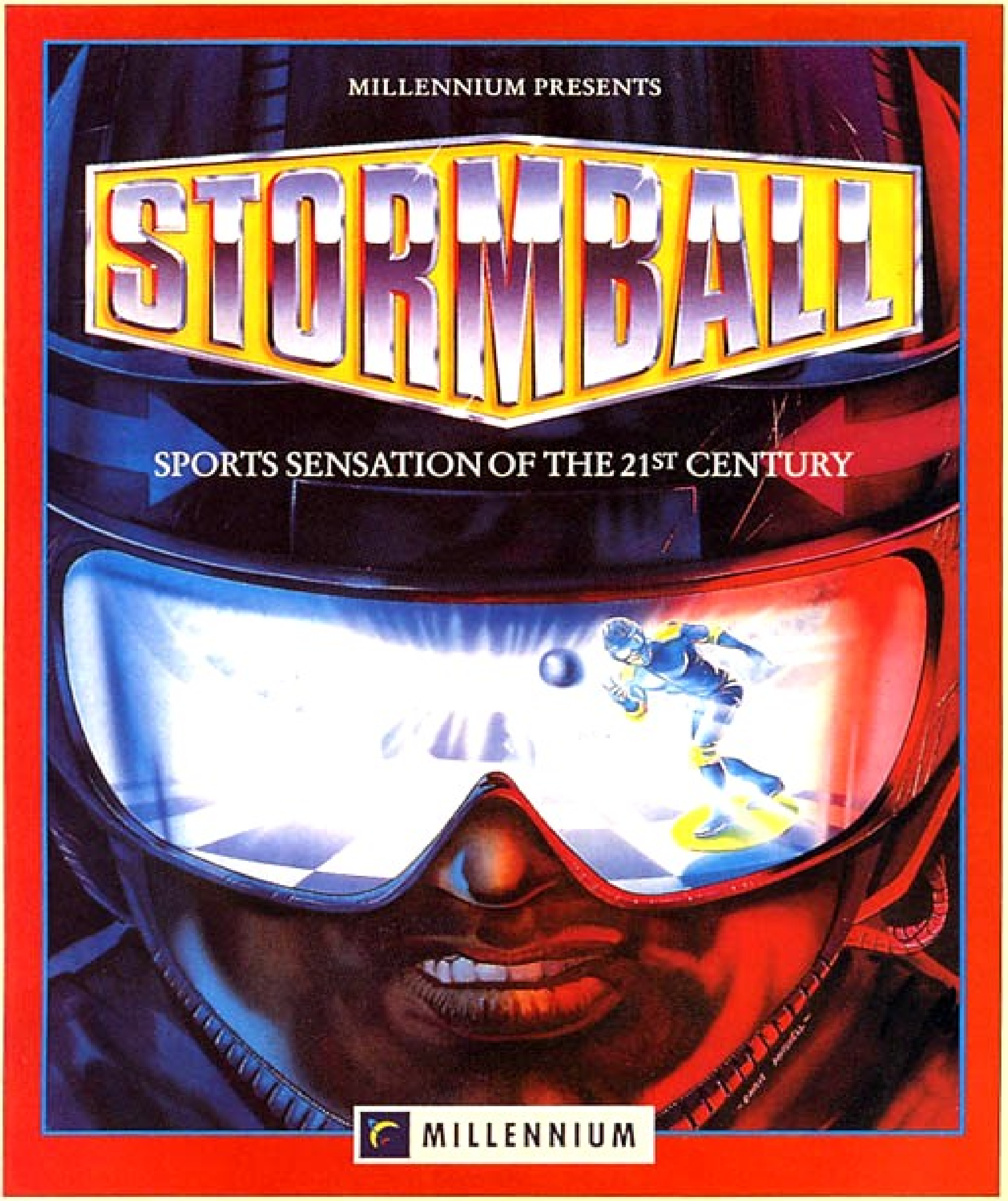
Speedball

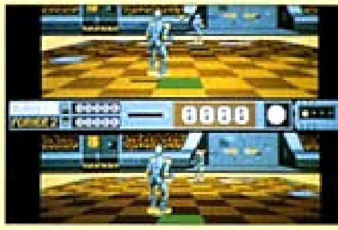
A500 - 1988

GRAPHICS	72%
SOUND	69%
GAMEPLAY	82%

A no rules violent sports game which is fun, although feels a little dated in style.

SCORE	**74%**



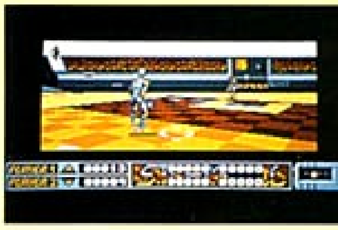


Split screen action shows you and your opponent locked in combat.

Vous apparaissez sur l'écran partagé, aux prises avec votre adversaire lors d'un combat.

Der gespaltene Bildschirm zeigt beide Gegner in Action.

Lo schermo diviso in due vi permette di vedere voi e il vostro avversario serrati nel combattimento.



You intercept and send a sizzling return back down the pitch for a winning play.

Vous interceptez le ballon et le renvoyez sur le terrain.

Der Ball muß geschnappt und blitzschnell in die andere Spielhälfte zurückgeschlagen werden.

Intercettate la palla e spedite una potente risposta verso il campo.



The stadium: in the blackness of night a point of light illuminates the sky.

Le stade : dans la nuit noire, un rond de lumière se détache et éclaire le ciel.

Das Stadion: Die Finsternis der Nacht wird durch einen Lichtkegel erhellt.

Lo stadio: nell'oscurità della notte una luce illumina il cielo.



The opposition: beat them and you could go top of the earnings league...

Les adversaires : battez-les pour pouvoir accéder aux gros salaires...

Die Gegner: Schlagen Sie sie, und Sie könnten zu einem Spitzenverdiener aufrücken.

Gli avversari: batteteli e passerete in testa alle graduatorie dei guadagni ...



"Psst! ... want to place a bet on the game tonight , pal?"

"Psst!...tu veux parier sur le jeu de ce soir, mon pote?"

"Psst!... willst Du für das Spiel heut nacht eine Wette abschließen?"

"Ehi, amico ... vuoi scommettere su un incontro?"

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MILLENNIUM

ROLLERBALL

INTERSOFT - 1994 - A500





Playing Rollerball I get the sense that no one actually play tested this for the creator before unleashing onto the unsuspecting public. The game levels are so frustrating and poorly designed with a non existent difficulty curve, this is a game that could only be loved by its creator. The idea is simple and reminds me of the many endless runner games that are available on phones everywhere these days, where the aim is to guide your rolling ball along the obstacle track that sprawls out into the horizon in space. Different coloured sections of track have different effects on you ball like red sections that slow you down, blue sections keep you bouncing while purple reverses your controls. Its nothing fancy to look at but the idea is sound and if executed correctly can be a lot of fun.

But its not executed correctly. Firstly the levels are poorly designed with some sections always claiming a life or two making the game extremely frustrating. There is no real build up of a few easier levels to get you into the game with difficulty that seems to swing all around from stupid hard to laughable easy right from the start. And when you die one of the thousands of times instead of your ball automatically placed in a safe area to start again, you are simply placed back right where you died over empty space, where you have to quickly move to safety or simply die again. While the game has a high score, there seems to be absolutely no point because when you die you are quickly whisked back to the title screen. There are no high score tables, and unless you quickly glance at you score when its game over you will never know what you scored. There isn't even a best score displayed to try and beat which really defeats the purpose of this game. Two players? Nope. Options? Nope. Level select or passcodes? Nope. Anything?? Nope... not even text to say 'press fire to start', or even 'Game Over' for that matter.



So is there anything good about this game? I guess the ball looks kind of ok, although the track is flat with no vertical obstacles or variety. The only thing that is going to gain the game some much needed points is the music which is not to bad to listen to, although that is all you get with the tune just constantly playing non stop on repeat right from the title screen till the moment you reach for the power switch to turn it off, and trust me, you will be reaching for that switch pretty fast.

If done right this could have been a lot of fun, but as it stands it feels like a half finished game with no real redeeming features at all. If ever you come across rollerball do us all a favour and roll it off a cliff, or into a fire, under a bus, a train, truck....



I am even to bored to write witty captions... you are a ball... you roll... Rollerball...

Rollerball

A500 - 1994

GRAPHICS	14%
SOUND	16%
GAMEPLAY	8%

It's the lowest score ever awarded by 880 Gamer! I think that sums it up really?

SCORE	9%

RBI Baseball 2

- Domark
- 1991
- A500

Baseball is not a big sport in Australia, and in fact I am struggling to think of anyone or any teams in Australia. I think I have seen baseball bats for sale in local sports stores but in my neighbourhood I think people are most likely buying them for protection rather than a friendly game down the park. With this in mind please excuse me if I don't know every small detail this sport requires in this review. I can tell you one thing though, RBI Baseball 2 is actually a surprisingly fun game with an equally surprising console game feeling that takes itself not to seriously.

The whole game of Baseball is there fully intact, and I am presuming all teams and players are present and correct for the year as this is an officially MLB licensed product. You can select your team and play through a single game or season, with thankfully a difficulty option in the settings for baseball noobs like me. Select your team line up and away you go! When batting or pitching you are presented with a behind the batter view allowing for some curve balls and other trickery, with handy little boxes showing your other players if they are on bases two and three (useful if pitching so you can see if anyone is going to try for a sneaky run!). When the ball finally connects with wood it all zooms out to give you a view of the field with small characters that wouldn't look out of place in Sensible Soccer. If you make it safe or get run out neat little speech bubbles appear above the referees (they are call that in baseball right?). Its all quite fun actually, although just like real baseball a game can drag on for an eternity. A short arcade game would have made a good inclusion to keep the interest of non baseball people like me.

Overall though if you have a passing interest in baseball, you will get some fun out of this title. The presentation is very console style through the menus and in game screens as you can see here, and its these fun graphics that prevent the game from feeling dry or dull. There is a really neat score board feature that has clever little animations and jingles, like for example when you make it to a base safely a little jingle and animation play of a cartoon safe dropping onto the base. Its a neat little touch, although thankfully there is an option to turn these off as it can slow things down having these always play after every event. The music is very light and fun as well suiting the overall style of the game perfectly. There is speech and other sound effects, although the speech is a little lo-fi but it all adds to the game in a good way. Hitting a home run will set the crowd off, but this unfortunately sounds like a gramophone recording playing through a tin can.

I am no expert at Baseball, but I know a good game when I play it and this is fun. Its not to serious in its presentation, but underneath its light-hearted approach is a solid game of baseball. Don't expect any TV style presentation, this is pure early console style baseball at its best, and if that sounds good to you then give this a crack and try to score a home run with RBI Baseball 2.



RBI Baseball 2

A500 - 1991

GRAPHICS	70%
SOUND	68%
GAMEPLAY	75%

Easy to pick up and a good bit of fun!

SCORE 70%

MASTERTRONIC - 1988 - A500

VECTORBALL

Now I know Vector Ball is an old game and was around the time when games were still porting across from older machines like the Commodore 64, but that does not excuse this game from been as unplayable as a lump of lard, and just as appealing!

The basic game is kind of like indoor soccer with golden robots sporting mow-hawk hair styles and naked muscular bodies guaranteed to freak out any homophobic person. Don't expect a pitch full of players though, there is simply you and your opponent and that is it. This makes for an odd game because once you get the ball you can not move (think netball), and so you have to pass it on... but with no one else on your team you have only your opponent and yourself to pass it to. This makes for a frustrating slug which becomes more chance than skill. More frustratingly when you don't have the ball pushing your controller in any direction moves your robot in that direction, but as soon as you have possession of the ball the controls change with left and right controlling direction to shoot and up and down for power. As you can imagine this results in a lot of errors as you race to the ball and before you shoot it off you have flipped 90 degrees only to kick the ball into the wall. Extremely frustrating.

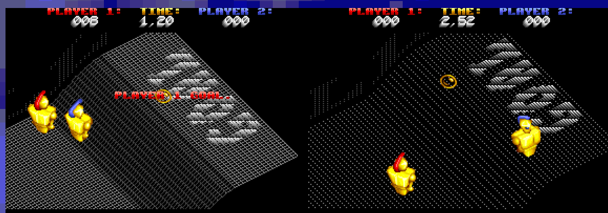
Before starting each game you have a choice of a dot pitch or shaded pitch. The later gives a more detailed rendering of the pitch, but be prepared for a five minute wait before you can play, and when a game is broken into 4 quarters with each quarter having to be rendered again you will be spending more time watching the 'please wait' screen than playing. Still, at least you have the pleasant piano music to calm your rage, a looping sample which repeats about every 10 seconds... and the rage starts to build again. Some nice sounds and an interesting cosmic twinkling sound each time you score make up the limited sound during play on a backing of silence.

The pitch may be bland, but surprisingly the robots are well animated with many frames as they rotate smoothly. The ball itself is rather odd that it is see through, almost like a glass ball which looks a little odd when kicked around by solid metal hunks! Apart from that the only last saving grace during play is it all runs fairly smooth when you actually get to play.

So Vector Ball is annoying and frustrating with no real redeeming features. The only thing I can say I like from the game would be the Gay Mardi gras style mow-hawk robots, which makes me worry more about my orientation than enjoy the game. I guess there is only one thing left to say... this game sucks balls... ewww...



Hey there you big hunk of man robot, looking mighty fine!



left is high setting, low on the right.. detail will cost you about 5 minutes



Boring screenshot 102... you will spend more time looking at the please wait than actually playing, so it seems fair its included here in all its glory!



Vectorball

A500 - 1988

GRAPHICS	24%
SOUND	21%
GAMEPLAY	18%

An interesting concept doesn't prevent this being a below average game....

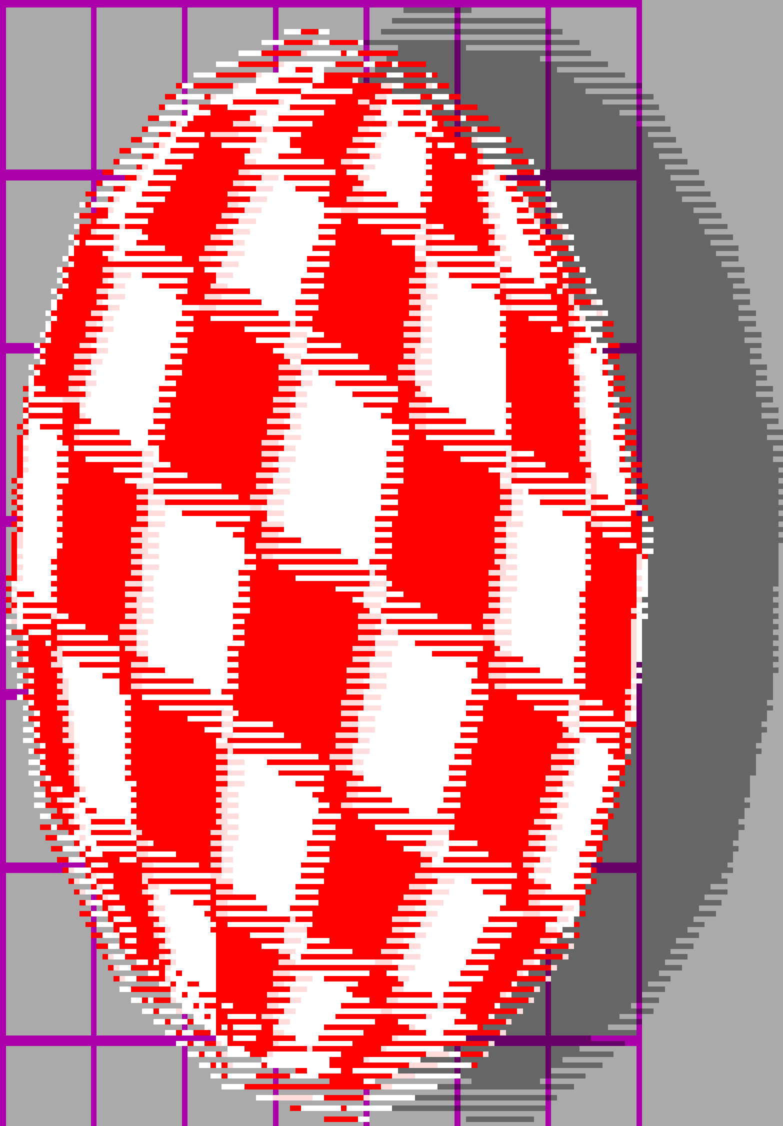
SCORE	22%

Bleeding eyes..

This issue it is back to the old skool with the famous Boing Ball demo which can be considered the father of all demo's on the Amiga, or even genesis! How could I go an issue dedicated to balls without including the most famous ball in the Amiga history, and review the original demo where it all started!

If the Boing demo was lacking in a little sound and you are craving something a little more sonically appealing, then Jesus On E's will blow your ear drums with non stop awesome 90's techno music. If playing Beat Box from this issues review of Pinball Dreams got you psyched for some pure cheesy non stop 90's, then you will be in heaven. While not really revolving around balls, it does have some visuals with circles and other balls whizzing around the screen, so I am sure we can stretch the rules a little to include this fantastic audio achievement!

And Finally we have Red Sectors MegaDemo which has a section that is a non stop ball banaza, and one of the earliest demos I can recall seeing on the Amiga which helped sell me on the Amiga. Seems balls played a big part in selling Amiga's worldwide!



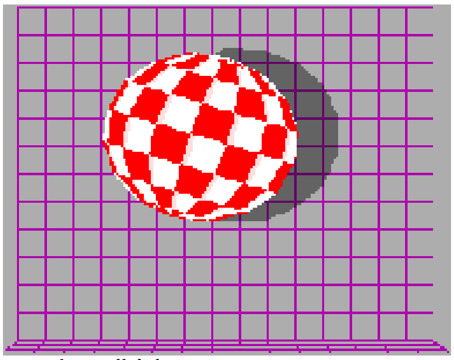
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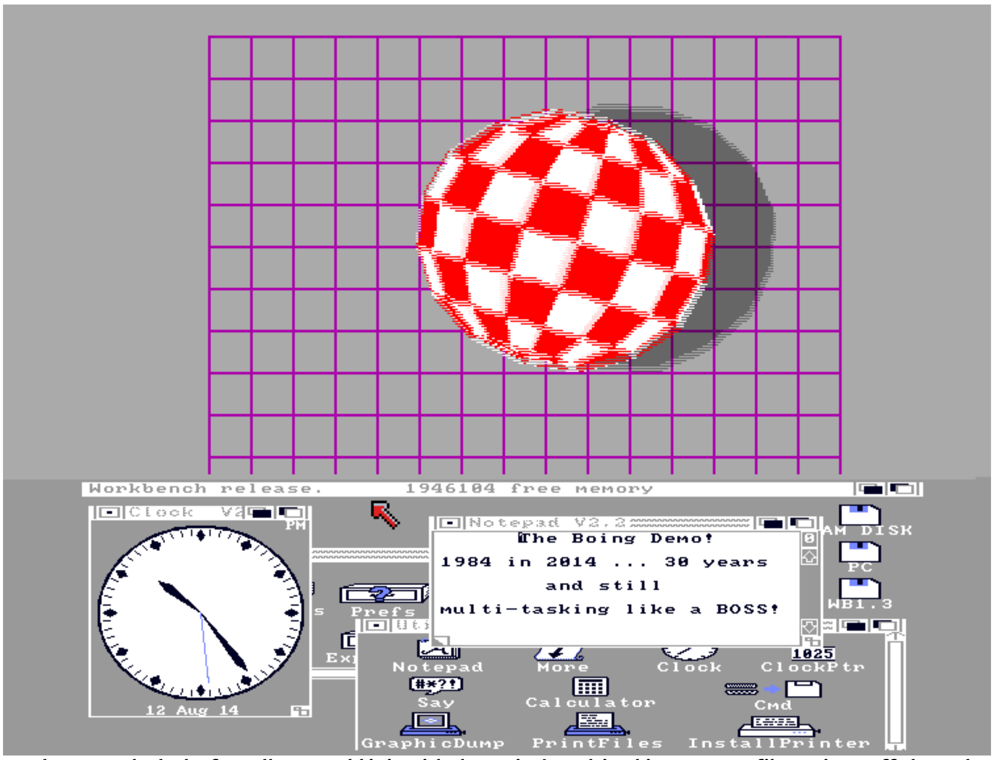
BOING BALL

- Amiga Corporation
- 1984
- Lorraine (Prototype)

There are probably some of you looking at this demo review and the unbelievable score at the bottom and wondering what makes this demo so amazing? The demo itself is a simple 3D effect ball that bounces up and down, side to side casting a shadow and a booming noise with each bounce. Its run from the Amiga desktop and can multi-task at the same time. That's it! FREAKING AMAZING! *Why, why, WHY* I hear you ask? Have a look at the images below. Say hello to Lorraine, the first Amiga prototype back in 1984. Look at that tangle mess of wires and boards, this is what this demo was built on, this was the Amiga's first demo!



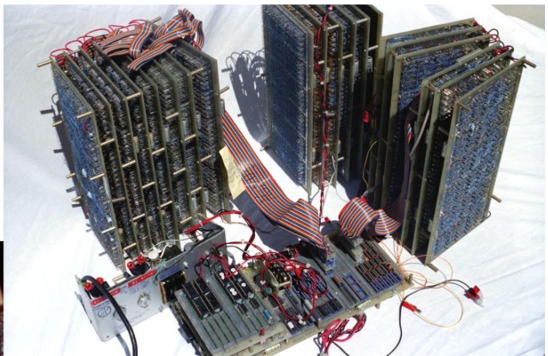
It's a Ball, it bounces.... Its AMAZEBALLS!

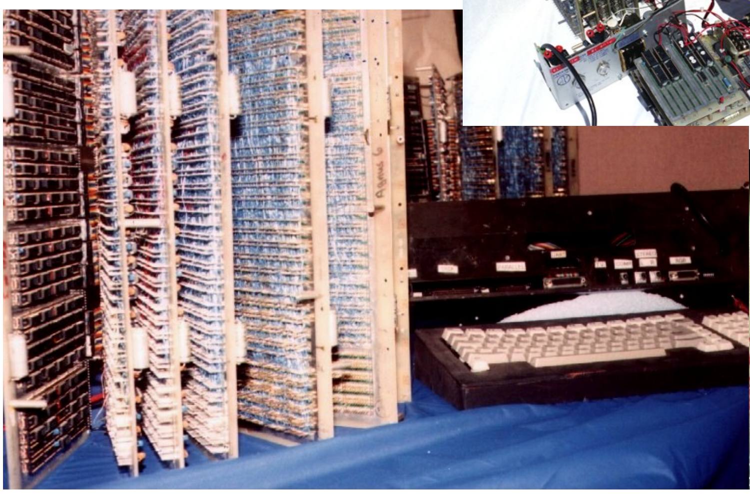


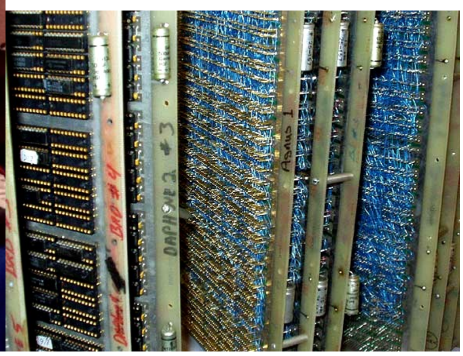
Not happy at the lack of Scroll text? Add it in with the Amiga's Multitasking! Or copy files, print stuff, do work...

This was not some pre-planned demo to lure investors though. This was made after a couple bottles of booze and some late night programming one night at the CES trade show in the Amiga booth when all had gone home for the night, on a prototype machine that was so sensitive it would break even if you breathed to heavy around it! This is the stuff of demoscene dreams! The original demo actually had no sound and less movement, but has gone on to be the unofficial mascot of the Amiga (and in later years officially), and represent everything the Amiga stands for built by a bunch of half crazy, fluffy slipper wearing talented individuals all working towards the dream that was the Amiga. Who knows, if it wasn't for the Boing ball Amiga Corporation may have not attracted the attention of Commodore who for better or worse, saved Amiga from its doomed fate with Atari, and that alone is worth every percent I am giving it here. Plus its an awesome bouncing ball in an issue all about balls! Although there is no scroll text...

Lorraine was the name given to the Amiga prototype as seen here. Amazingly these days companies like Apple have to do everything they can to hide new tech, but back then to get to CES Amiga Corp booked a seat on a plane, and boarded with this in a pillow case with a smiley face on affectionately known as Joe Pillow. Try do that on an airline today! Unfortunately they were not able to score an additional meal for their friend.. although they tried!







100%

Wait.. what? Really? Yes, really! Deal with it! And if you cant, write up your own mag so you can vent your disgust at this insane score! :o)

RED SECTOR INC MEGADEMO

- RSI
- 1989
- OCS









Before I had my Amiga, I remember seeing this cool demo that had lots of objects spinning around the screen made of balls. I was mesmerised! Now all these years later I have watched the whole MEGGAAAA demo.

It's more like a bunch of smaller demo's all joined together, almost like a cracktro compilation with a lot.. and I mean a LOT of scroll text. Each section you can advance through by hitting the left mouse button, and all sections are pretty much single effect with music and scroll text.

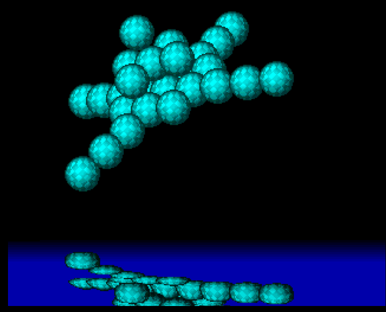
Music has lots of nice speech samples and is ok to listen to, but is very early MOD style music with hard raw instruments. Its fun, but you don't end up sticking around each section to long unless you are interested in the text.

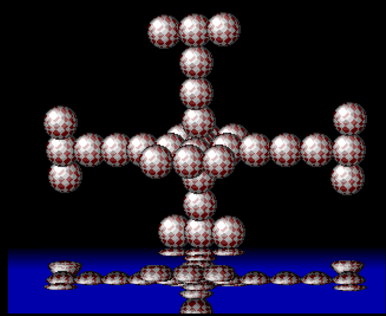
The ball section that has objects created from coloured balls is still neat with some fun animations even today, and there are some beautifully drawn fonts and images throughout (some faces ripped straight from Speedball), although at the end of the day it just feels like one giant demo scene greeting and nothing more.

In '89 I could imagine this was crazy impressive and was used in stores to show off the Amiga, but compared to Demo's that followed that started to show artistic direction and style, this just goes purely for old skool scroll text. The ending is however very neat with an interactive quiz which makes for more interactive fun than most. Fun, but don't expect to much!

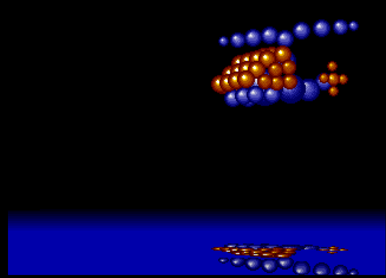
67%



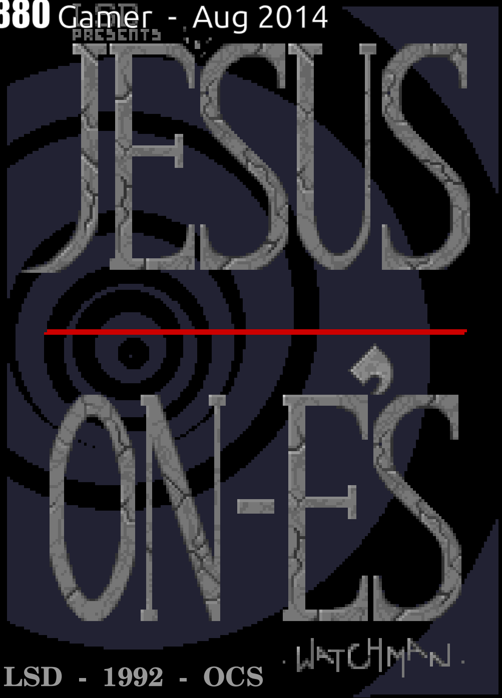












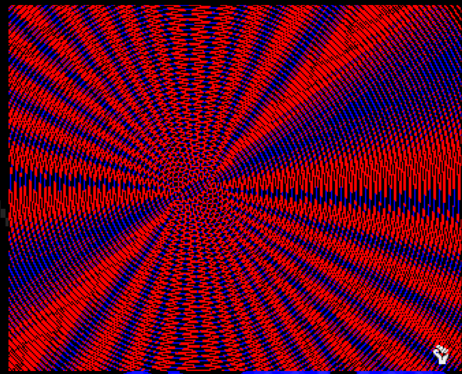


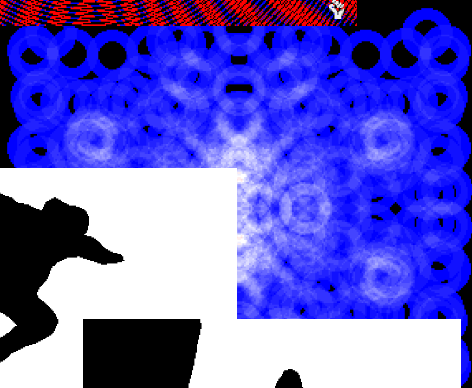
Warning, warning, excessive early 90's techno music overload inbound! Approach only if you are a fan of the genre! If you are a fan, then you will be in heaven with almost half an hour non stop mega mix techno that is of the highest quality and probably the best example of its kind on the Amiga.

Lets talk visuals. They are simple, repetitive and nothing special. Words and effects are timed to the music all the way through, but on the whole are quite unimpressive and very repetitive. But mind blowing visuals are not what Jesus is about. They serve their purpose which is to play in the back ground while you chill out to the music.

The real star of Jesus is the music. As mentioned it is non stop and spans nearly half an hour never letting up or becoming repetitive. Spread over two disks the music is actually a clever use of multiple music modules all tied together and play like a DJ mix, constantly loading and streaming them meaning if you are using original hardware you are going to need a second drive. There are neat guest appearances such as the muppets and (the now behind bars) Rolf Harris which give much needed breaks to the onslaught of drum loops. All of the instruments and speech are nice and clear, and although borrowing a lot of voices and instruments from classic early 90's music it never attempts to blatantly copy or replicate those tunes aiming for an original score.

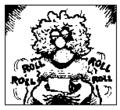
Never play this through a crappy pair of $5 computer speakers, hook this up to a decent sound system with the bass turned up, and turn the dial to 11! This is a demo that you don't so much watch, but more listen to while glancing occasionally at the screen. Only when you do this will you truly understand what makes Jesus on E's so special. It is an amazing representation of the early 90's techno music scene and even today if you like that style of music you will absolutely love this slice of the 90's! *LET'S GO! LET'S GO! LET'S GO! LET'S GO!...... I think I can smell something burning over there.....*



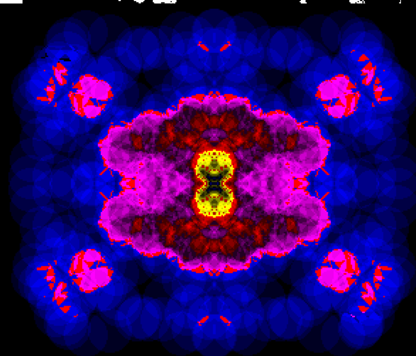


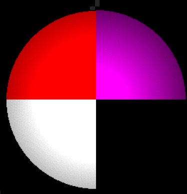


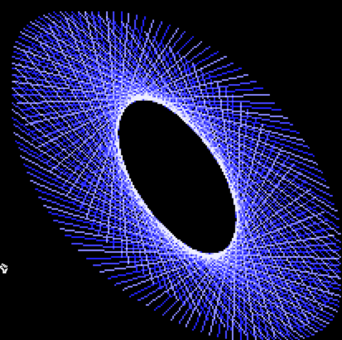


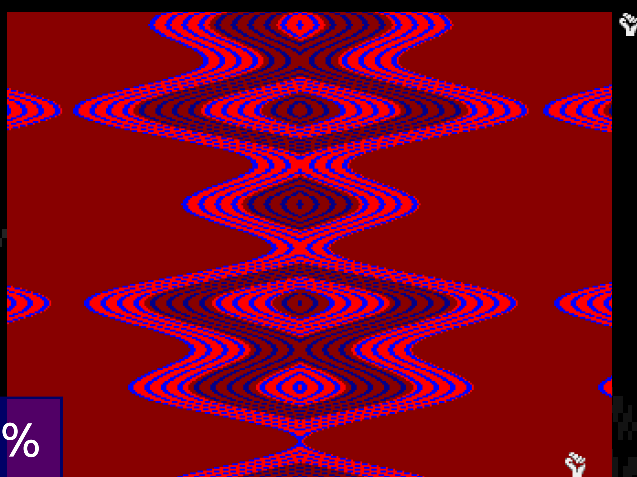




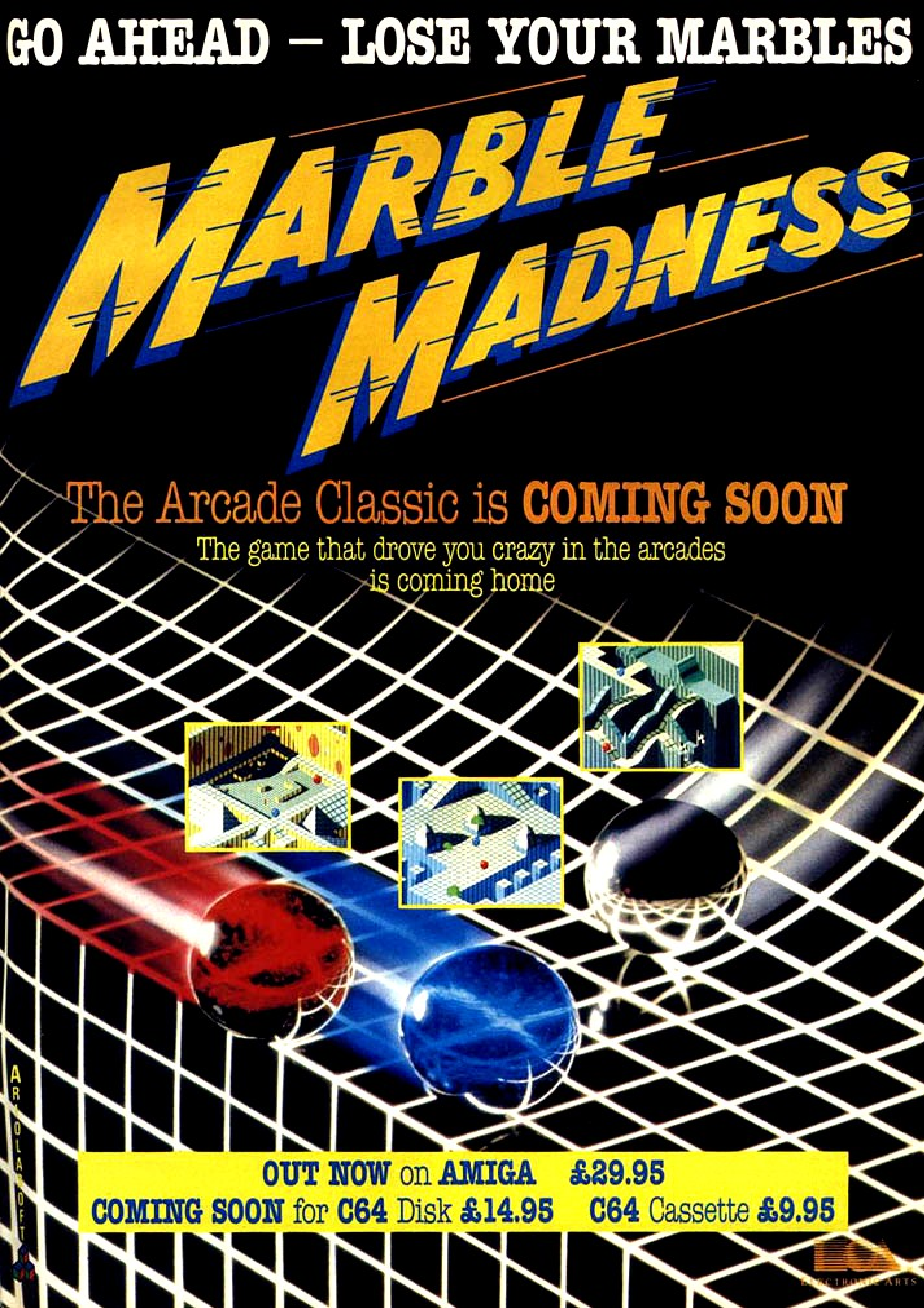








96%


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ARIOLASOFT

880 cheat!

Who you gonna call... CHEAT BUSTERS! Yeaaaahhhh!



Pinball Dreams

You like to play with balls huh? Would you like to have more balls? How about 20 more balls to play with?? If that sounds good to you, then pick up your controller during play and pus it in the following directions :

Up, Down, Left, Left, Right, Down, Up



Brutal Sports Football

Press L followed by a number from 1 to 3 to select a league. Note: 1 represents the highest league. Then, press M followed by a number from 1 to 6 to select a match. Then, press one of the following keys during game play to activate the corresponding cheat function.

Effect	-	**Key**
Lightning	-	**L**
Wall breaking	-	**G**
Hare	-	**S**
Freeze blocks	-	**F**
Invincibility	-	**I**
Shield	-	**R**
Tortoise	-	**D**



STORM BALL

I feel a storm is coming and you are going to need all of the help you can get to beat your opponents! So to help you win a match we are here to let you know this very original and hard to remember cheat....

1. Start the match.

2. Type the following during play..

LET ME WIN

3. Win the match!

Take care with this cheat, very very tricky to remember



FUZZBALL

To gain unlimited lives, sometimes one must first loose all of their lives.... wax on, wax off... paint the fence... or just sit around playing with your fuzzy balls! If those fuzzy balls are not playing nice to you and you need a hand, give the following a try....

Kill four opponents on the bottom of level one, and then intentionally lose all of your lives until its game over. Then enter **BOB** as your name on the high score screen.

880 talk back!

From the depths of the mail bag at Australia Post...

I've been enjoying reading this new free magazine so much I even advertised it on the Retro Asylum Facebook Page as well as the one of Commodore AMIGA too.
Thank you for bringing the magazines back in a day where all the AMIGA game based magazines have died out.

PS: Will you be doing any specials like special editions relating to certain developers, special editions of PD game titles old and new and special editions of arcade, other console and other computer games proper titled or PD rip-off that use a different title, but are the same game, that are ported to the AMIGA, covering the best and worst ports of the bunch, with the rule of these specials being it had to be on a different system first and finally special editions based on the pack in titles, like the multiple Cartoon Classics revisions and Comic Relief?

Keep up the good work entertaining us with plenty of more witty AMIGA Game reviews for the foreseeable future.

It's great to see the old mags back like AMIGA Power brought to the modern age.

Can't wait for your PD gems coverdisk if there is going to ever be one, as I'm sure as they are mostly drag and drop games, as well as workbench loadable so that you can make you own custom ones with multiple free PD titles on a disk, that you can pull a great one off.

Dan

Wow, quite a letter there Dan and a lot of great idea's! I can fully see 880 Gamer doing a PD special with a bunch of high quality PD games on the cover disk along with a full blown out PD special inside. Next issue is going to have a special that I have planned already, but this might be a go for issue 6!
Thanks for the compliments around the witty reviews and holding me up on the level of Amiga Power. To be honest I like to think I lay somewhere between AP and CU in terms of style... I don't drop the work Pants anywhere near enough to be in their league! And as for witty.... well, the jury is out on that one.
Anyway, thanks for the feedback, and I hope you enjoy issue 4!

Hi Mark,

If you have a download transfer limit on the website you host 880Gamer on, expect to exceed the threshold soon... Sorry ;)
Cheers,
Marcin

Hmm... I don't seem to have set off any alarm bells at Internode yet... lets hope they keep supporting us! By the way... if you guys and girls from Internode are reading this, did I mention what a great bunch you are, such great service and reliability, surprisingly handsome and beautiful bunch of people with kind and carefree hearts supporting little guys like us... grovel grovel... please don't shut us down. Think of the fans... think of little Timmy! Think of all the Amiga nerds like me out there that you will deprive of their only digital supply of goodness... well, you get the idea. Just don't shut us down ok? Thanks!

Hi there

I checked with Cody who gave me the OK to add your mag to the Amiga Mag Rack, after all APOV was added so why not yours too... The JPGs are not great quality, even so they're a lot bigger than the PDF (and worse) but at least you can click through to the reviews from HOL this way etc.

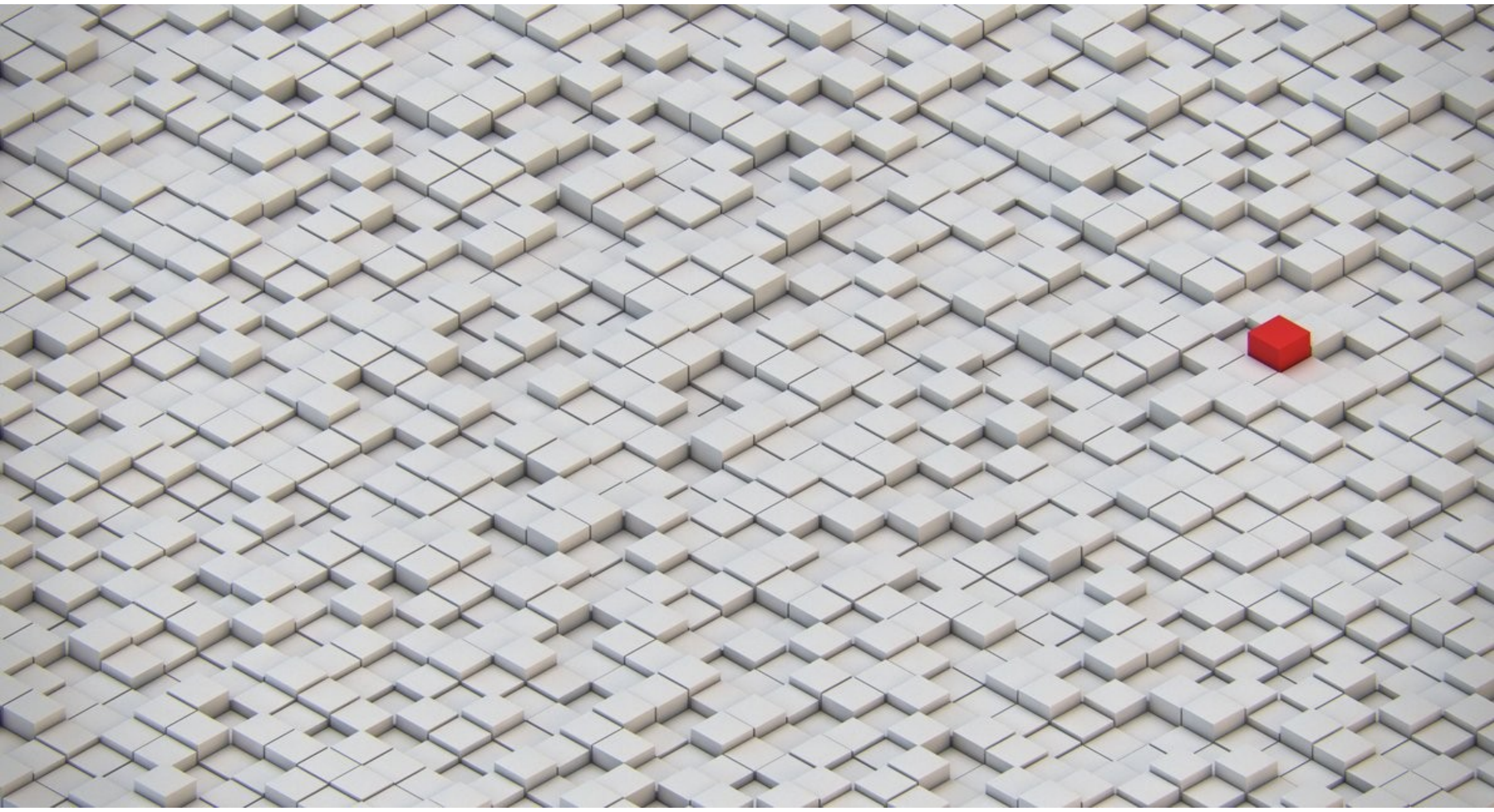
Anyway, do you have the disk labels you made for the coverdisks? I "faked" the disk for issue 1 by grabbing a plain blue one and copying/pasting the coverdisk label as best I could, but didn't do the others as I hoped you'd have a higher quality pic I can use.

Also I will (at some point, not tonight) add a link directly to your site for the originals, just need some time to do it and work out where to put it! :)
Codetapper

You sir are a legend! Before starting issue 5 I will make time to 'remaster' the coverdisks from issue 1 to 3. I have started using a higher res image and new style from this issue (Do you like the Amiga Formatted instead of IBM formatted?). Thanks again for all your hard work and support! LEGEND! =)

Remember, feel free to drop us a quick email at :
880Gamer@gmail.com
Thanks to everyone for your comments and support!

>>next issue



Its an Isometric lovers dream!

....how about.. The Settlers, Populous, Desert Strike.... and more....

The scrolly text shout out bit...

I would like to acknowledge the following people / groups / software / sites for making 880 Gamer possible:

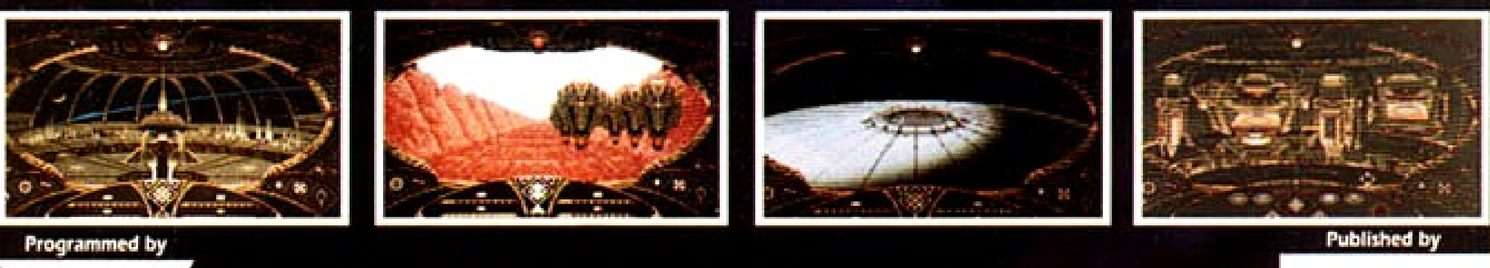
Ubuntu – 880 and emulation is run on Ubuntu, along with use of the Ubuntu font used within 880 Gamer
FS-UAE – A big thanks to Frode Solheim and the UAE team for bringing great Amiga emulation to Ubuntu
WHDLoad - Bert Jahn's masterpiece, making disk swap-less dreams come true
The GIMP / Fotowall – All image manipulation powered by the gimp and his full leather suit, with awesome help also from Fotowall!
LibreOffice – 880 is fully written up and saved in PDF using LibreOffice Writer .. and its free just like 880 Gamer!
Lemon Amiga – Thanks for their wonderful website where some information is gathered.
EAB – For helping spread the word of 880 Magazine, and for good sport in the game comp. Bring it!
ADA – Both to the Amiga Demo Archive site and all of those that keep the scene alive and pumping to this day!
HOL / Amiga Magazine Rack– Some Cover disk ADF files and information gathered from these wonderful sites (BIG SHOUT OUT TO CODETAPPER!)
The Amiga – An eternal thanks to Jay Miner and the amazing Amiga team that built this great machine
EVERYONE! - You guys ROCK! No... I mean it, you really are a great bunch of Amiga fanatic crazy folk just like me, and thats just great!!! Thanks!

I also want to take a moment to be a little serious for a change...

My heart felt condolences goes out to all of those affected and touched by the double tragedy that has befallen both Malaysian Airline losses. These tragedies have affected many people all around the world including here in Australia, and I am truly sorry for your loss. My thoughts are with you all in this difficult time.
Just importantly though my thoughts are also with all of those within Malaysian Airlines who have equally been devastated and affected with the loss of work colleagues and family. I have had the honour of flying with your airline including my first international trip ever. Your professionalism and more importantly amazingly friendly team of wonderful people can expect to see me fly again with you in the future when the opportunity arises. Stay strong and support each other during this time, and thank you. - Mark Stanner.



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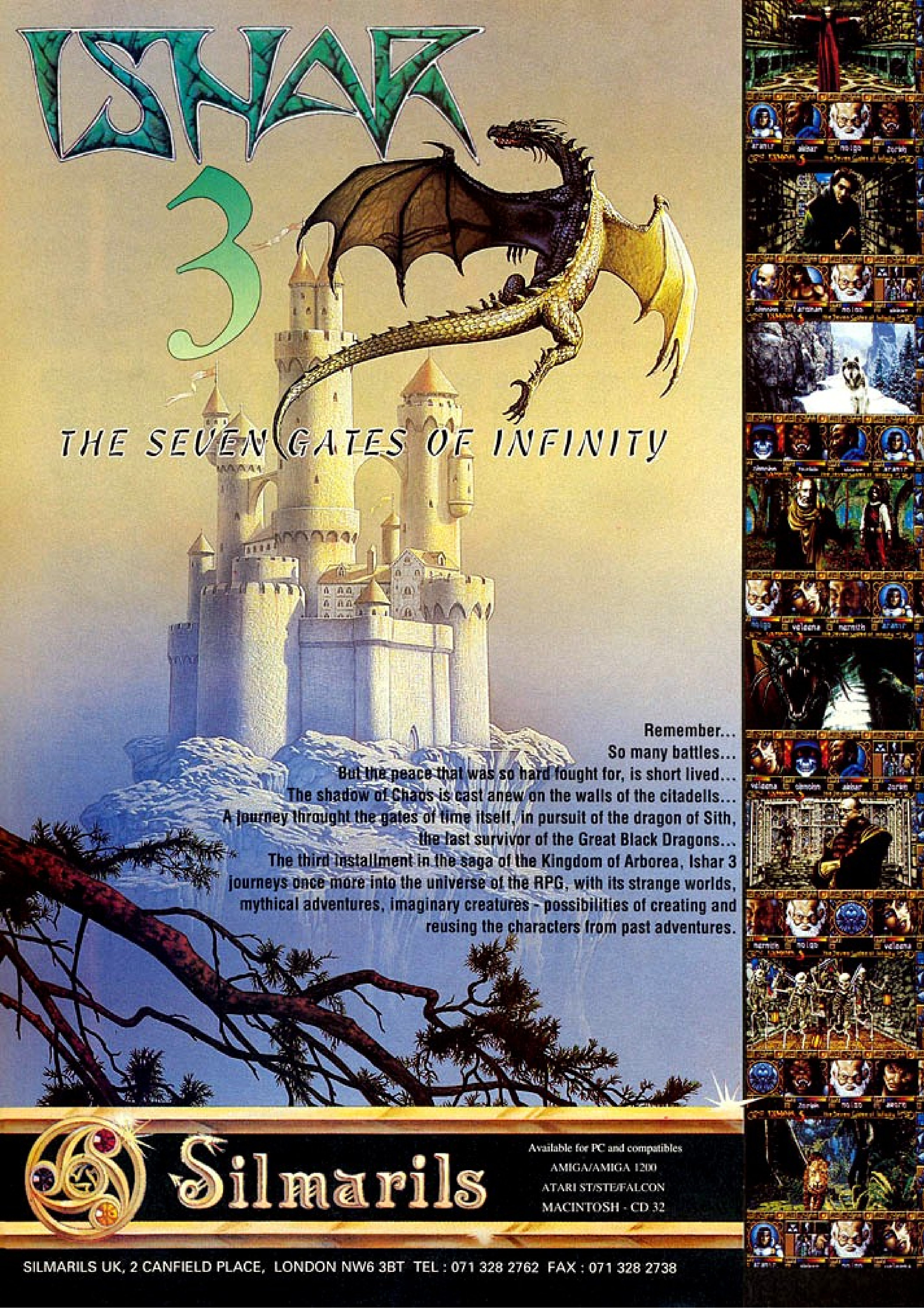
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